AMENDMENT

Sir:

This communication is responsive to the Office Action dated May 6, 2002, concerning the above-referenced patent application.

REMARKS

Claims 1-18 are currently pending in the present application. No amendments have been made to the claims.

Claims 1-18 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being unpatentable over Brockman, U.S. Patent No. 5,884,300. This rejection is respectfully traversed and reconsideration thereof is requested.

The referenced Brockman discloses an inventory pipeline management system 100 wherein model inventory values for each product and for each field office and local distribution center are determined by an inventory model determination unit 305. A data collection unit 325 collects data from a logistics/transportation section 345 and the field office/local distribution centers 355 and determines an actual inventory value for

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